

**CONTAINER WITH MULTIPLE CONFIGURATIONS**

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### **Background**

U.S. Patent 6,012,842 to Openiano describes a container with a handle where the handle is connected to the outside of the container. Openiano describes a handle that can be used to carry the container. Openiano's container includes cords that are attached such that the cords may be tied into a bow for gift wrapping the container.

U.S. Patent 6,233,786 to Lin describes a bag with a handle attached in two places.

### **Brief Description Of The Drawings**

Figure 1 illustrates an example unfolded body of an example container with loop holders attached, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 2 illustrates an example unfolded body of the example container with a loop secured through loop holders, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 3 illustrates an example partially folded body of the example container with a loop secured through loop holders, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 4 illustrates the example container with the loop configured to form a long handle, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

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Figure 5 illustrates a cut away view of the example container with the loop configured to form a long handle, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

5 Figure 6 illustrates the example container with the loop configured to form a pair of short handles, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 7 illustrates a cut away view of the example container with the loop configured to form a pair of short handles, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

10 Figure 8 illustrates a self-adhesive address booklet, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

15 Figure 9 illustrates the example container with the loop configured to form a decoration, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 10 illustrates the example container with the loop configured to form a decoration, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

20 Figure 11 illustrates the example container closed with a self-adhesive address sticker, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

25 Figure 12 illustrates a cut away view of the example container closed with the self-adhesive address sticker, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 13 illustrates the example container addressed with the self-adhesive address sticker, according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

30 Figure 14 illustrates an example unfolded body of a second example container, according to an alternative example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 15 illustrates an example unfolded body of the second example container with a loop, according to an alternative example embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 16 illustrates a label that may be printed or applied to the outside of the container, illustrating the use of the container, according to the example or alternative example embodiments of the present invention.

### **Detailed Description Of The Example Embodiments**

According to an example embodiment of the present invention, a loop may be secured to a body of a container to form a container for an object, e.g., a purse, a container for mailing, a store bag, etc. The loop may be configured to form handles for the container having at least two different sizes. Additionally, the loop may be configured to form a decoration for the container. It will be appreciated that the loop may be configured with the body to form handles for the body of more than two sizes. Additionally, it will be appreciated that the number of handle sizes may be dependent on the number of times the loop is secured to the body of the container.

Figure 1 illustrates an example unfolded body of an example container with loop holders attached, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The example body of the container may be formed from a single sheet of foldable material. The sheet of foldable material may be a laminate including a metal layer suitable for welding, e.g., Polialuvel dry peel available from WIPF group. The sheet of foldable material may alternatively be formed from other materials, e.g., paper, cardboard, metal mesh, metal foil, cloth, etc. If the container is used to form a purse or a grocery bag, it will be appreciated that the body may need to have appropriate strength or water resistant properties. It will be appreciated that multiple sheets of material may also be used to create the body of the container.

The example unfolded body illustrated in Figure 1 may be folded to form the body of the container. The body may include a closable top 102, although depending on the

intended use of the container, this top may be omitted. The closable top may be a lid or a flap. Other enclosure mechanisms may also be used.

The example unfolded body may include bottom panels 106 and 108 and side panels 104 and 110. Bottom panels 106 and 108 may be connected to each other. Side panel 104 may be connected to bottom panel 106. Side panel 110 may be connected to bottom panel 108. The unfolded body of the example container may also include fold lines 150, 152, 154, and 156. When the body is folded, fold lines 152 and 156 may act as bottom edges for the container. The unfolded body of the container may also include weld areas 112, 114, 116, 118, 119, 120, 122, and 124. Weld areas 112 and 114 may be part of panel 104. Weld areas 116 and 119 may be part of panel 106. Weld areas 118 and 120 may be part of panel 108. Weld areas 122 and 124 may be part of panel 110.

As shown in Figure 1, two loop holders 126 and 128 may be joined to the unfolded body. The loop holders 126 and 128 may be joined to bottom panels 106 and 108, e.g., the loop holders 126 and 128 may be welded to the bottom panels 106 and 108 along weld areas 130, 132, 134, and 136. Depending on the particular design, and the strength and flexibility of the material from which the sheet and the loop holders are manufactured, other techniques may be used to join the loop holders to the body of the container, e.g., staples, tape, tabs, adhesive, or any other known permanent or semi-permanent joining approach. It will be appreciated that the loop holders 126 and 128 may alternatively be joined to other points, e.g., to side panels 104 and 110.

Figure 2 illustrates an example unfolded body of the example container with a loop secured through loop holders, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The loop 200 may be secured to the body of the container by securing the loop through the loop holders 126 and 128, e.g., by threading the loop under the loop holders in an area between the welds areas 130 and 132 and weld areas 134 and 136. It will be appreciated that there may be more than two loop holders 126 and 128 securing the cord 200 to the body of the container. The loop may be continuous, e.g., without any distinct end points. Additionally, the loop may have the freedom to move

longitudinally while secured to the body of the container. The loop may be a cord tied in a knot, a ribbon, a chain, or other material suitable to act as a handle for the body of the container. It should be appreciated that the loop may be secured to the body of the container in a way that allows it to be removed, e.g., it may be a string tied in a knot  
 5 which may be untied to remove the loop. It will also be appreciated that the loop may be fabricated as multiple pieces which are joined together to form the loop.

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 Figure 3 illustrates an example partially folded body of the example container with a loop secured through loop holders, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. As illustrated the unfolded body may be folded along fold lines 10 150, 152, 154, and 156. To form the example body of the container the sheet may be welded along weld areas 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, and 124. Weld area 118 may be welded to weld area 114, weld area 120 may be welded to weld area 124, weld area 112 may be welded to weld area 116, weld area 118 may be welded to weld area 122,  
 15 weld area 114 may be welded to weld area 124, weld area 112 may be welded to weld area 122. It will be appreciated that, depending on the particular design, and the strength and flexibility of the material from which the sheet is manufactured, the welds may be replaced by other bonding approaches, e.g., staples, tape, tabs, adhesive, or any other known permanent or semi-permanent joining approach. The loop 200  
 20 may be secured to the body of the container by loop holders 126 and 128. The body of the container may be welded along weld areas 114, 116, 120 and 124. Other ways of joining or attaching the folded body may also be employed, e.g., glue.

Figure 4 illustrates the example container with a handle in a longer position, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The loop 200 may serve as a  
 25 handle for the example container. Fold line 156 may be a bottom edge of the example container. A user of the container may grasp the container by the handle. The container may thus be suspended from the user's hand. This may result in a handle approximately the full reach of the loop that can be achieved without unsecuring or  
 30 removing the loop.

Figure 5 illustrates a cut away view of the example container with the handle in a longer position, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. Loop holders 126 and 128 may secure the loop 200 in place, e.g., by threading the loop under the loop holders in an opening between the weld areas 130 and 132 and weld areas 134 and 136. It will be appreciated that instead of threading a continuous loop as shown, a loop with ends could be provided, with the ends of the loop attached to inner surface of the container, e.g., with glue, a staple, or a knot. The loop 200 may serve as a handle for the example container. A user of the container may grasp the container by the handle. The container may thus be suspended from the user's hand. This may result in a handle approximately the full reach of the loop that can be achieved without unsecuring or removing the loop.

Figure 6 illustrates the example container with a pair of handles in a shorter position, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The loop 200 may serve as two handles for the container. A user of the container may grasp the container by the two handles. The container may thus be suspended from the user's hand. The handles may be in a shorter position in that the distance from the bottom edge 156 of the container to the place where the handles would be held in Figure 6 is substantially less than the distance from the bottom edge 156 to the place where the handle would be held in Figure 4.

Figure 7 illustrates a cut away view of the example container with a pair of handles in a shorter position, according to an example embodiment. Loop holders 126 and 128 may secure the loop 200 to the body of the container, as described above. The loop 200 may serve as two handles for the container. A user of the container may grasp the container by the two handles. The container may thus be suspended from the user's hand. The handles may be in a shorter position in that the distance from the bottom edge 156 of the container to the place where the handles would be held in Figure 6 is substantially less than the distance from the bottom edge 156 to the place where the handle would be held in Figure 4.

Figure 8 illustrates an address booklet, that may be provided as part of an example embodiment of the present invention. The address booklet may include an end portion 304 and a viewed portion 302 attached to the end portion. The end portion 304 may include a hook configured to secure the address booklet on the loop 200.

5 The booklet may contain self-adhesive portions 310 secured to back portions 312. The self-adhesive portions 310 may peel off of the back portions 312. The back portions 312 may be made of a different material than the viewed portions 302. As illustrated in Figure 8, the self-adhesive portions may contain lines so that address or greeting information may be placed upon it. It will be appreciated that the viewed  
10 portion 302 may itself serve as a back portion 312 and have a self-adhesive portion 310 attached to it. The self-adhesive portion 312 may be used to weld the top 102 to a side panel 104 and 110 of the body of the container. Additionally, the self-adhesive portion 312 may be placed on the body of the container to provide a location for greeting or address information.

15 Figure 9 illustrates the example container used as a mailing envelope or a gift package, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The top 102 may be closed by folding it along fold line 150. The top 102 may be closed to side panel 110 by a self-adhesive portion 310.

20 Figure 10 illustrates a cut away view of the example container as a mailing envelope or a gift package, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. In figure 10, the example container has the top 102 closed. The loop 200 and address booklet may be placed inside the body of the container. Additionally, it will be  
25 appreciated that the loop 200 may be secured to the body of the container in a way that allows the loop 200 to be removed from the body when the example container is used for wrapping or mailing, e.g., the loop may be a string tied in a knot which may be untied to remove the loop.

30 Figure 11 illustrates the use of the example container as a mailing envelope or a gift package, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. A self-



adhesive portion 310 may be used to address the container by placing it on side panel 104 of the body of the container.

Figure 12 illustrates the container configured so that the loop 200 acts a decoration for the container, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The loop 200 may wrapped around the body of the container in a way that is visually appealing. Additionally, the address booklet 300 may be attached to the loop 200, e.g., by using a hook included as part of the address booklet 300.

Figure 13 illustrates a cut away view of the container configured so that the loop 200 acts as a decoration, according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The loop 200 may wrap around the body of the container in a way that is visually appealing. Additionally, the address booklet may be attached to the loop 200, e.g., by using a hook included as part of the address booklet.

#### **Alternative Example Embodiment**

According to an alternative example embodiment of the present invention, a loop may be secured to a body of a container to form a container for an object, e.g., a purse, a container for mailing, a store bag, etc. The loop may be configured to form handles for the container having at least two different sizes. Additionally, the loop may be configured to form a decoration for the container. It will be appreciated that the loop may be configured with the body to form handles for the container of more than two sizes. Additionally, it will be appreciated that the number of handle sizes may be dependent on the number of times the loop is secured to the body of the container.

Figure 14 illustrates a second example unfolded body of an example container, according to an alternative example embodiment of the present invention. The example body of the container may be formed from a single sheet of foldable material. The sheet of foldable material may be a laminate including a metallic layer suitable for welding, e.g., Polialuvel dry peel available from WIPF group. The sheet of foldable material may alternatively be formed from other materials, e.g., paper,

cardboard, metal mesh, metal foil, cloth, etc. If the container is used to form a purse or a grocery bag, it will be appreciated that the body may need to have the appropriate strength and water resistant properties. It will be appreciated that multiple sheets of material may also be used to create the body of the container.

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The example unfolded body illustrated in Figure 14 may be folded to form the body of the container. The example unfolded body may include bottom panels 106 and 108 and side panels 104 and 110. The unfolded body of this example container may also include fold lines 150, 152, 154, and 156. When the body is folded fold lines 152 and

10 156 may act as bottom edges for the container. The unfolded body may be folded along these fold lines, as depicted in Figure 3, to form the body of the container. To form the example body of the container the sheet may be welded along the weld areas 112, 114, 116, 118, 119, 120, 122, and 124. Weld area 118 may be welded to weld area 114, weld area 120 may be welded to weld area 124, weld area 112 may be  
15 welded to weld area 116, weld area 118 may be welded to weld area 122, weld area 114 may be welded to weld area 124, weld area 112 may be welded to weld area 122. It will be appreciated that, depending on the particular design, and the strength and flexibility of the material from which the sheet is manufactured, the welds may be replaced by other joining approaches, e.g., staples, tape, tabs, adhesive, or any other  
20 known permanent or semi-permanent joining method.

As shown in the example sheet illustrated in Figure 14, four holes 140 may be placed in bottom panels 106 and 108. It will be understood that the holes 140 may alternatively be placed in side panels 104 and 110. The body may include a top 102,  
25 although depending on the intended use of the container, this top may be omitted.

Figure 15 illustrates a second example unfolded body of the example container with holes, according to an alternative example embodiment of the present invention. The loop 200 may be secured to the body of the container by securing the loop through  
30 holes 140, as depicted in Figure 15. It is appreciated that there may be more than 4 holes 140 attaching the loop 200 to the body of the container. The loop may be continuous, e.g., without any distinct end points. Additionally, the loop may have the

freedom to move while being secured to the body of the container. The loop may be any material suitable to act as a handle for the body of the container, e.g., the loop may be a cord tied in a knot, a ribbon, or a chain. It should be appreciated that the loop may be secured to the body of the container in a way that allows it to be removed, e.g., it may be a string tied in a knot which may be untied to remove the loop. It should also be appreciated that the loop may also be fabricated as multiple pieces, joined together.

With the exception of holes 140 used to secure the loop 200 to the body of the container instead of loop holders, the second embodiment may in all respects be the same as the first embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 16 illustrates a label that may be printed or applied to the outside of the container, illustrating the use of the container, according to the example or alternative example embodiments of the present invention. The label may include a series of indicia indicating various configurations of the container, e.g., as a bag with a long handle, as a bag with two short handles, as a decorative gift wrap, as a mailing envelope, etc. The indicia may include word labels as well, or word labels may be omitted.

## MODIFICATIONS

In the preceding specification, the present invention has been described with reference to specific example embodiments thereof. It will, however, be evident that various modifications and changes may be made thereunto without departing from the broader spirit and scope of the present invention as set forth in the claims that follow. The specification and drawings are accordingly to be regarded in an illustrative rather than restrictive sense.